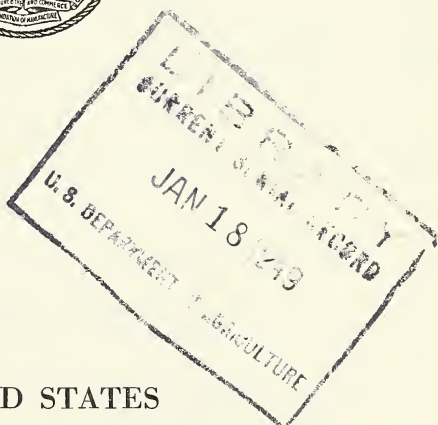


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Report
of the
Director of Personnel

1948



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL,
Washington, D. C., September 1, 1948.

HON. CHARLES F. BRANNAN,
Secretary of Agriculture.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: I respectfully submit the following report of personnel administration in the Department of Agriculture, covering the period July 1, 1947, through June 30, 1948.

Sincerely yours,

T. ROY REID, *Director.*

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REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL, 1948

INTRODUCTION

As Government has grown, its projects and problems have multiplied; inherent in this growth has been an increase in the number of public servants, together with increased problems of administration and management. There was a time in the history of this Department when the Secretary knew nearly all the employees personally and their appointment was a personal matter, but that is not possible today. The direct and indirect employees of the Department approach a yearly average of 225,000.

With this expansion of the Department, at one time confined to Washington but now reaching to all parts of the United States and points throughout the world, there has also evolved a civil-service system to carry forward the spirit of a public-service career for all Federal employees. Throughout these years, various legislative acts have been passed affecting the Federal employee; also, a considerably greater number of rules, regulations, decrees, decisions, and orders issued by the President, Civil Service Commission, Bureau of the Budget, General Accounting Office, Employees' Compensation Commission, the Federal courts, and other bodies of the National Government are in force.

During the fiscal year the Office of Personnel prepared and issued 1,347 pages of instructive policy and informative material resulting from the enactment of new laws, the issuance of Executive orders, Civil Service Commission rules and regulations, decisions of the Comptroller General and other regulatory issuances. Approximately 26 laws (permanent and temporary) directly affecting personnel administration in the Department, were passed during the past year alone. A few laws, such as that which authorized cooperation with the Mexican Government for the control of foot-and-mouth disease, were approved during the preceding fiscal year but their full effect was not felt until after July 1, 1947.

Some of the laws passed that necessitated the expenditure of considerable time in the determination and promulgation of new policies and procedures were:

Public Law 396, approved January 19, 1948, which provided veterans' preference for widowed and divorced or separated mothers of ex-servicemen and ex-servicewomen who suffered death or permanent total disability while on active duty.

Public Law 426, approved February 28, 1948, which made sweeping amendments to the Retirement Act. As a subject of vital interest to the employees of the Department, it was necessary to interpret the effect of the amendments for them and to make available printed material to be used in applying the amended retirement law to individual cases.

Public Law 494, approved April 21, 1948, which provided for the transfer of the Remount Service from the Department of the Army to this Department. Negotiations were entered into with the Department of the Army for transfer of some personnel and detail of others. The Office was also concerned with consolidation of the Remount Service into this Department's organizational structure.

Public Law 623, approved June 10, 1948, which requires the preferment of written charges in any case of suspension of a permanent or an indefinite employee. It also provides compensation for employees for the time without pay if employee is returned to duty in those cases where removal or suspension was unjustified.

Public Law 741, approved June 22, 1948, which makes the decisions of the Civil Service Commission mandatory upon the departments in the case of appeals of employees or former employees.

Public Law 806, approved June 29, 1948, which provided a new charter for the Commodity Credit Corporation. In view of the close connection between the Commodity Credit Corporation and the Production and Marketing Administration, various personnel authorities are in process of examination to determine the effect of the public law upon authorities in use in the Corporation and the Administration.

Legislation in its formative stages has had its impact on the work load of this Office. The Department has been called upon frequently by the Senate and House Civil Service Committees to express its views with respect to personnel legislation. In other instances, we have felt impelled to submit voluntary reports on proposed legislation when we believed its effect would be beneficial or detrimental to the administration of the programs of the Department or the welfare of its employees. We have endeavored to keep our agencies advised of the progress of all pending personnel legislation.

The operating official charged with program responsibility at one time, to a large extent, made his own rules for hiring and firing. Under today's system this is no longer true, and rightly so, or our civil-service system would collapse. Today we expect the operating official to be a program man and to show program accomplishment such as the Congress has directed. Obviously, it would be humanly impossible for him to be intimately familiar with all the ramifications of the civil-service system under which he must operate, and administrative folly to burden him with such a requirement. Of necessity, he has had to seek this service and counsel from persons familiar with the restrictions and safeguards that have been set up over the years. As in other fields, a degree of specialization has evolved in personnel administration. This is how personnel offices were born—born to assist the operating official get his job done within the framework of a civil-service system so that in this democracy our citizens will receive equal treatment in their aspirations for public service and as public servants.

The first act of Congress affecting personnel administration in the executive branch of the Government was in all probability the act of July 27, 1789, which established the Department of Foreign Affairs, later the State Department. In this act provision was made for the appointment of a chief clerk and other personnel.

Since that time a large number of personnel laws have passed as a result of recognition by Congress of the desirability of establish-

ing Government service on a plane which would assure employment of its best qualified citizens. Advances in understanding of the needs of Government employees have also played a considerable part in motivating the passage of personnel legislation which might be characterized as employee benefit laws. Almost all laws which establish program activities in the Department have certain sections devoted to various aspects of personnel administration. As a result, we have today a great mass of legislation with which individuals doing personnel work are required to be familiar. A chronological list of over 200 laws now in effect (excluding those of a temporary character) entitled "Statutes Affecting Personnel Administration in the United States Department of Agriculture" has been compiled for reference use.

As operations have grown, emphasis on decentralization of the personnel function has proportionately increased; accordingly, delegations of authority in the Department have been extended to permit the culmination of personnel actions closer to the operating level. While this has served to speed up the paper processes of personnel administration at the program work level, it has conversely increased the supervision, coordinating, and policy determination aspects of the personnel job at the staff level. Since an account of our decentralization program has been communicated to your Office in previous annual reports, I am omitting any detail about it now. It has been mentioned however, since a knowledge of it is so essential to an understanding of our personnel program.

In the fiscal year 1948 considerable attention was given the field of personnel administration throughout the Government, particularly with reference to staffing requirements. Some of the reports requested were the following:

1. Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, United States House of Representatives (Rees Report)—Personnel Staffing in 1940 and 1947.
2. Committee on Appropriations, United States House of Representatives (Taber Reports)—two reports on personnel staffing during period 1938-47.
3. Bureau of the Budget—Survey of Common Services—Workload data on employment and classification activities.

In view of these developments, I have prepared this report with the purpose of showing the status of personnel administration in the Department as it relates to the changing aspects of the total employment and scope of the personnel program. It is our purpose to present a factual picture of what we have been doing and why we are doing it. For this reason, the beginning of the report will be directed to the development of the personnel job and statistical data related to it. The latter part of the report will be devoted to activities at the departmental and agency levels, ending with a summation of projected plans as I now see them.

PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION IN THE DEPARTMENT

The Department of Agriculture was among the first of the Federal agencies to recognize the need for specialized personnel services to assist the operating official. This Department was active in recognizing the inequities of salary administration as they existed because of

diverse ways in which wage rates were determined, and in 1919 detailed Dr. W. W. Stockberger (later Director of Personnel) to the Congressional Joint Commission on reclassification of salaries. The Commission studies resulted in the passage of the Classification Act of 1923, a milestone in the civil-service system.

Dr. Stockberger was designated to carry out the provisions of this act in the Department and as Departmental Classification Officer he became the center about which many personnel activities began to cluster. Classification work required consideration from a departmental point of view, cutting across all bureaus. It required knowledge of positions and inevitably involved problems of organization. Personnel administration was beginning to take shape.

Before 1925, the Salary Classification Office, as it became known, and eight other offices and divisions concerned with problems of personnel and finance were a part of the immediate office of the Secretary. The Secretary consolidated those offices on April 7, 1925, in the new Office of Personnel and Business Administration "to supervise and coordinate all departmental business activities, including personnel administration, budget, fiscal and accounting matters, purchasing of supplies and equipment, traffic, housing, etc." This organization continued until June 1, 1934, when the Office of Personnel and Business Administration was split into three parts, one of which retained the title "Office of Personnel." The Office presently operates through seven functional divisions as follows: Classification, Investigations, Employment, Employee Health, Personnel Relations and Safety, Training, and Organization and Personnel Management. The Employee Health Division was established during the past year to carry out an employee-health program as authorized by Public Law 658, Seventy-ninth Congress (5 U. S. C. 150).

The Executive order directing all Federal agencies and departments to establish personnel divisions headed by personnel directors was issued June 24, 1938. At that time, the Office of Personnel of the Department had already completed 13 years of service and is now approaching a quarter of a century of experience in this special field.

Our philosophy of personnel administration places a great deal of emphasis on the kind of relations the personnel office maintains with other organizations, both inside and outside the Department. It conceives of the central personnel office as the policy-determining office, the pace-setter and coordinator. It favors the maintenance of bureau personnel offices and personnel offices in the field wherever possible. In order to maintain uniformity and to insure that departmental policies will be respected, the central personnel office must have certain essential controls, such as review of promotions and classification allocations. Control, however, must not be the chief technique; it must be the last resort.

Principal reliance continues to be placed on sincere and truly cooperative relations with the bureaus. They are to be served, not "told." If they must be given a "No," it must be given as an inescapable requirement of the facts in the situation. The personnel director needs to make decisions and he must be willing to compromise between what he would like to accomplish and what can be done under existing circumstances. The work of the bureaus must be facilitated; what they are doing is what the Department exists for; personnel administration is only a managerial tool, not an end in itself.

EMPLOYMENT TREND IN THE DEPARTMENT

As indicated in the introduction to this report, the extent of the personnel job is affected by the number of employees who are hired and separated. Turn-over during normal times remains rather constant but the rate of turn-over increases tremendously during and after a period of national emergency. In addition to the changing emphasis on the personnel program created by the rise and fall of the turn-over rate, there is the influence of program adjustment arising through everyday legislative and administrative processes. During the past several years agencies have been transferred both to and from the Department, reorganizations have been necessary within the Department, some activities have been increased and others have been curtailed. All of these things have had a direct bearing on the personnel program of the Department and for this reason chart A (p. 8) has been prepared to show the employment trend. Although it is self-explanatory to a large degree, I wish to direct attention to the following pertinent facts:

1. From 1938 to the summer of 1941, the period immediately preceding the war, there was a gradual rise in the number of full-time paid employees due to an expansion of departmental programs in this prewar period of national preparedness.
2. Peak employment of full-time workers occurred in August 1941 (chart A) and declined sharply thereafter or during the war period showing definitely the Department was not a war-swollen agency.
3. In the summers of 1945 and 1946 there was an increase of employees as we began to get into postwar programs but in 1947, as a result of reduction in force, there was a decline; and in December of that year full-time employment in the Department was 51,821, the lowest in more than a decade.
4. Subsequent upswing during the early months of 1948, as reflected on chart A, merely represents the usual seasonal expansion of departmental activities. The chart shows that employment is at its highest during the summer of each year and at its lowest in the winter months.

A detailed analysis of agency figures shows that during the past decade the number of employees in the Agricultural Research Administration has remained fairly constant. This is also true of the staff offices and smaller agencies of the Department. The Soil Conservation Service and the Forest Service have been quite constant, disregarding the Civilian Conservation Corps effects on them and the usual seasonal expansion of the Forest Service. Farmers Home Administration has had the greatest proportional decrease in number of employees, which is now about one-half its prewar strength. During the war years, there was an expansion in the Production and Marketing Administration, where most of the Department's war activities were concentrated, but even with this expansion the total Department population declined during the war.

In addition to the total of paid employees shown on the chart, the Office serves a yearly average of approximately 130,000 persons cooperating or collaborating with but not paid by the Department. These include: County committeemen and county employees other than com-

mitteemen in the Production and Marketing Administration; extension agents in the various States; employees of the Federal land banks, national farm loan associations, banks for cooperatives, production credit associations, and others. Services to this group vary from that of merely performing one personnel function, such as retirement, to assistance with a full personnel program.

Chart B (p. 9) shows the increase and decrease in the total paid employment of the Department and reflects the number of additional persons served, using June figures for each year. Average total paid employment in the Department for the 11-year period shown was about 92,000 based upon Civil Service Commission reports, Form 3257. The yearly average of additional persons served but not reported on Civil Service Commission Form 3257 plus persons serving without compensation was about 130,000 and the average of all persons served each year approaches 225,000.

NUMBER OF PERSONNEL WORKERS

At the request of the House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations, this Department submitted reports concerning the number of employees engaged in personnel work. One of these reports covered data for the period 1938 through 1947, reported as of June each year, and included all persons inside and outside personnel offices who devoted 50 percent or more of their time to personnel work. Chart C (p. 10) has been prepared to graphically portray this information for the 10-year period.

A comparison of chart C with charts A and B on total paid and full-time employment of the Department for that period shows a definite relationship. Peak employment of personnel workers was reached in 1942 as a result of the tremendous turn-over caused by the Nation's entry into World War II. Since then there has been a decline in the number of persons engaged in personnel work in the Department and a gradual change in the ratio of personnel workers to total employment. In 1941, the staff of the Office of Personnel reached its peak for the 10-year period, with a total of 218 employees; as of June 30, 1948, this Office had 111 employees, or almost 50 percent less than the 1941 figure.

During the period of decline in the number of personnel workers throughout the Department (chart C), turn-over rate for paid employment practically doubled, thereby indicating a greater work load. Based upon Civil Service Commission reports, Form 3257, the turn-over rate in fiscal year 1943 was 46.11 percent; in 1944, 57.3 percent; in 1945, 49.4 percent; in 1946, 64.9 percent; in 1947, it had increased to 73.3 percent; and last year, it declined slightly to 67.9 percent.

Table I (p. 7) and chart D (p. 11) have been prepared to show the relationship of personnel workers to employment in the Department on a ratio basis.

It is interesting to note in Report No. 2189 of the House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, that the Department was in the "intermediate cost group" as compared with other agencies of the Government and in "classification activities" was in the "lowest cost group." The Federal Personnel Council and the Bureau of the Budget are directing attention to a Government-wide project now in progress to develop staffing standards and determine factors influencing personnel work. We heartily endorse the objectives of this undertaking.

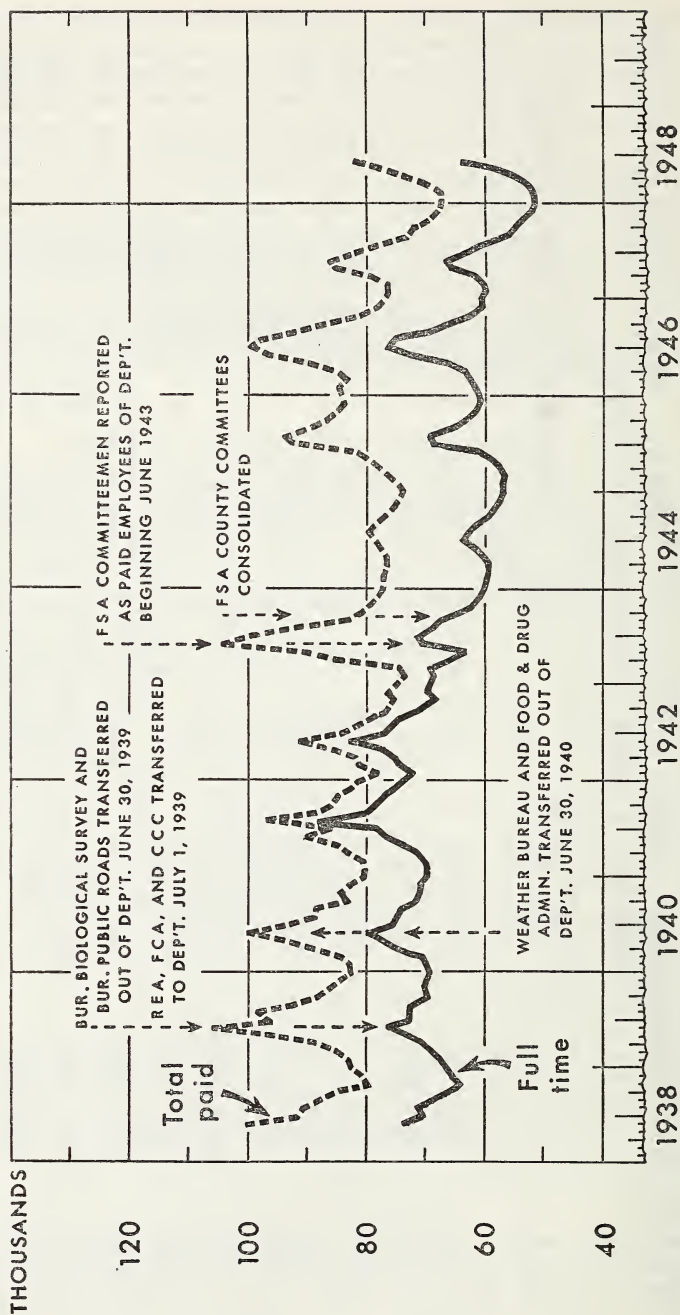
TABLE 1

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
RATIO OF PERSONNEL EMPLOYEES TO TOTAL PAID EMPLOYMENT
AND TO TOTAL PERSONS SERVED

YEAR	EMPLOYMENT			PERSONNEL EMPLOYEES		
	PAID 1/	OTHER 2/	TOTAL	NUMBER 3/	RATIO TO 3257	RATIO TO TOTAL
1938	100,125	104,282	204,407	879	1 TO 114	1 TO 233
1939	105,591	116,167	221,758	1,024	1 TO 103	1 TO 217
1940	100,167	138,345	238,512	1,188	1 TO 84	1 TO 201
1941	90,169	145,754	235,923	1,290	1 TO 70	1 TO 183
1942	91,141	122,060	213,201	1,417	1 TO 64	1 TO 151
1943	104,510	129,738	234,248	1,364	1 TO 77	1 TO 171
1944	77,720	116,865	194,585	1,177	1 TO 66	1 TO 165
1945	81,993	122,791	204,784	1,115	1 TO 74	1 TO 181
1946	96,603	154,252	250,855	1,102	1 TO 88	1 TO 228
1947	86,364	143,965	230,329	920	1 TO 94	1 TO 250

^{1/} TOTAL PAID EMPLOYMENT, CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION REPORT FORM 3257.^{2/} PERSONS NOT REPORTED, ON CSC 3257 PLUS EMPLOYEES SERVING WITHOUT COMPENSATION.^{3/} BASED UPON REPORT REQUESTED BY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, DATED DECEMBER 17, 1946.
(ALL DATA AS OF JUNE EACH YEAR.)

CHART A UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
TOTAL PAID AND FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES*
BY MONTHS, JUNE 1938 - JUNE 1948



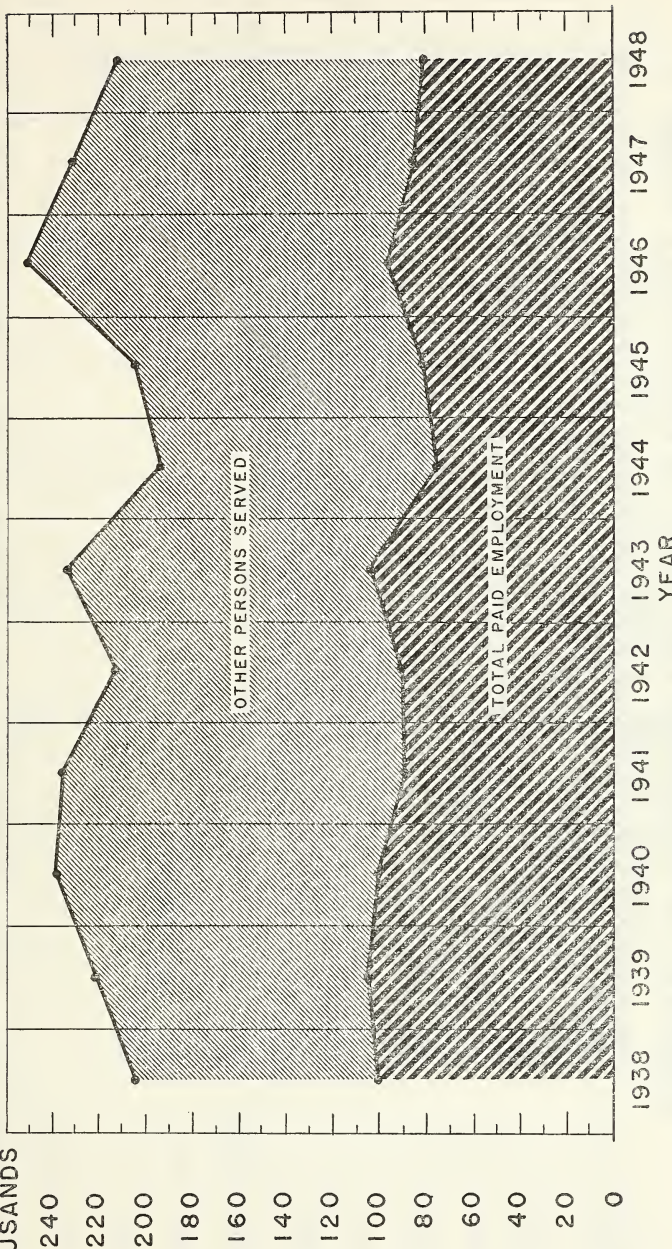
*AS REPORTED ON SOURCE CIVIL SERVICE FORM 3257

CHART B

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

TOTAL PAID EMPLOYMENT^{1/} AND OTHER PERSONS SERVED^{2/}

THOUSANDS



^{1/}TOTAL PAID EMPLOYMENT, CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION REPORTED ON FORM 3257.

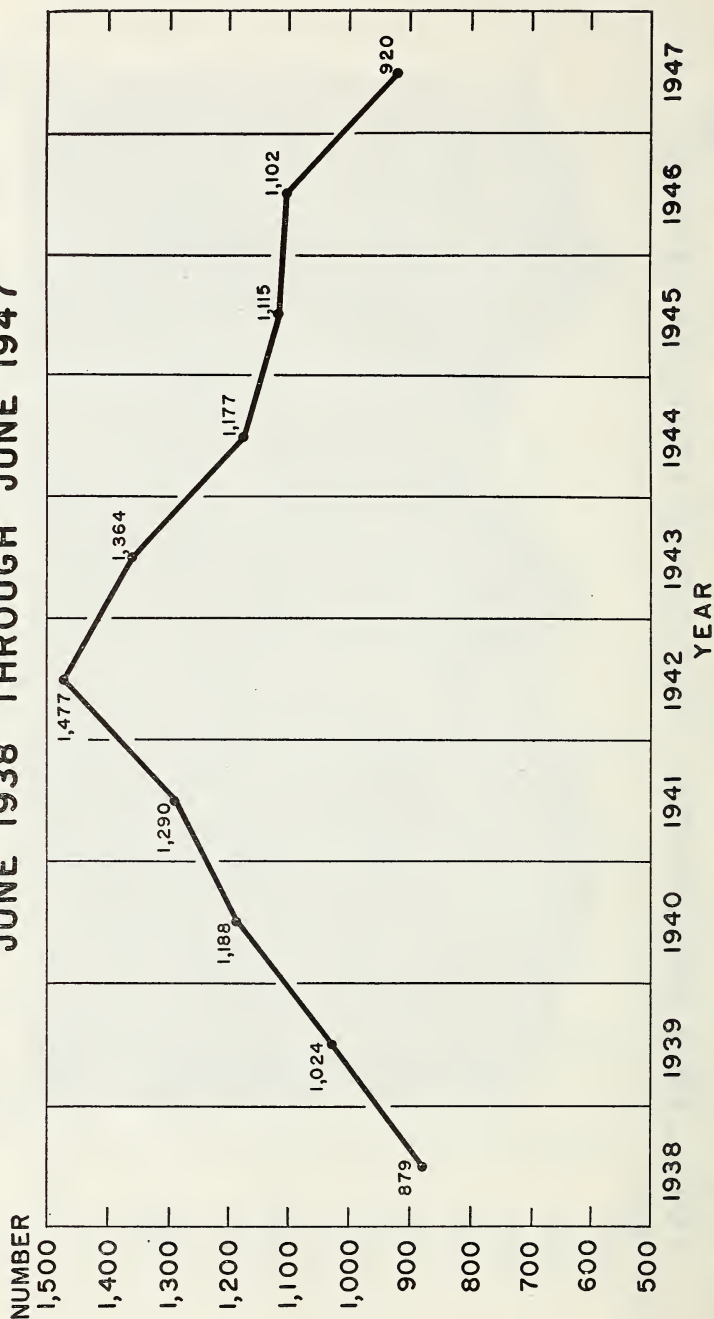
^{2/}PERSONS NOT REPORTED ON FORM 3257 PLUS EMPLOYEES SERVING WITHOUT COMPENSATION. } (DATA AS OF JUNE EACH YEAR)

CHART C

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

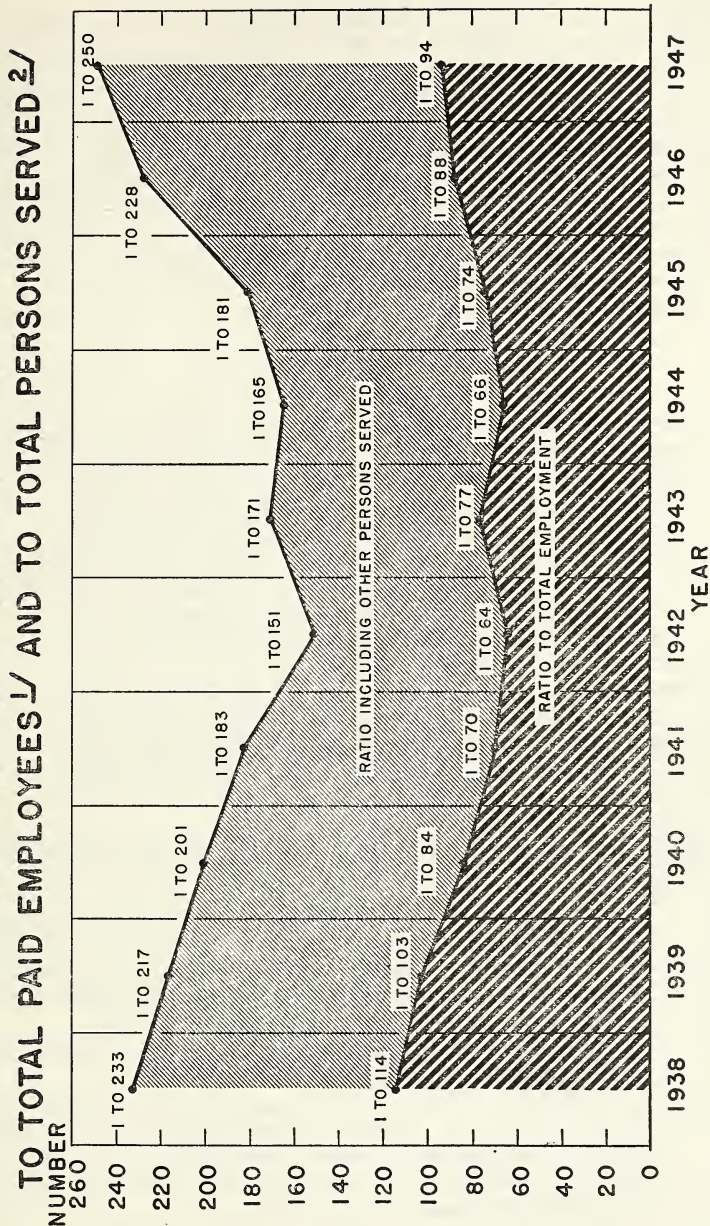
NUMBER OF PERSONS ENGAGED IN PERSONNEL WORK ↴

JUNE 1938 THROUGH JUNE 1947



↴ BASED UPON REPORT REQUESTED BY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, DATED DEC. 17, 1946

CHART D
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
RATIO OF PERSONNEL EMPLOYEES
TO TOTAL PAID EMPLOYEES^{1/} AND TO TOTAL PERSONS SERVED^{2/}



^{1/} TOTAL PAID EMPLOYMENT, CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION REPORTED ON FORM 3257.

^{2/} PERSONS NOT REPORTED ON FORM 3257 PLUS EMPLOYEES SERVING WITHOUT COMPENSATION. } DATA AS OF JUNE EACH YEAR

While the statistical data presented herein reveals a definite relationship between the fluctuation of the Department's employment and the number of personnel workers, we believe that there is a leveling-off point below which the personnel staff cannot safely decrease without sacrificing some of the activities generally accepted as essential to administrative efficiency in the operations of the agencies of the Department. We are hopeful that studies of staffing requirements as related to the quality of the personnel program will reveal this. We hope, also, that in the years to come there may be a greater common understanding among all concerned of what should be expected from sound personnel administration and what in the way of manpower will be required to give it.

CURRENT PROBLEMS

This report would be incomplete without specific reference to what I consider one of our foremost current problems, namely, the attraction of competent persons to the Federal service and the retention of our best people. I am grateful that in you we have a Secretary who is personally familiar with this problem, and has made unstinted effort to improve the situation. The problem is Government-wide and can be alleviated only with the combined help of top administrators throughout the Federal Government and Congress. It is important not only because of its effect on the morale of present employees, but its future effects on the general nature of employees if it continues as at present.

As the largest single employer in the country, the United States Government could well be a leader rather than a follower in attempting adjustments to wage patterns set by other employers. Federal employment should attract and hold the best qualified persons available in this Nation if as a Nation we are to retain our place of world leadership.

Some of the things we in the Department are doing toward this end are as follows:

1. Working closely with the colleges for the improvement of courses to meet departmental needs.
2. Preparing film strips and booklets to acquaint prospective employees with job opportunities in the Department and to create interest in securing employment with us.
3. Directing attention to the need for revisions of law affecting Federal salary and wage rates.
4. Participating with other Federal agencies through the Federal Personnel Council in studies, considerations, and actions to improve the Federal civil-service system, the welfare of the Federal employee, and the general effectiveness and economy of the Government.

Some of the things that others can do :

1. Give credit where credit is due and direct criticism where criticism is due thus avoiding unjustified general criticisms which undermine morale and create disinterest and insecurity.
2. Recognize the need for and take action to promote a public career service that will not only attract outstanding talent but also enable us to hold the outstanding talent we now have.

You are well acquainted with the inroads private industry has made on much of our top talent so I need not reiterate any of the cases here. However, we can expect these "raids" to continue unless the Classification Act is revised to permit raising the present ceiling on salaries. Industry not only continues to raid our best talent, but with the inducement of better starting salaries, it also drains off much of the top crop of college graduates. Although we are powerless to compete from the salary angle, we have attempted somewhat of a solution as follows.

During the past fiscal year, you appointed a Committee on Internship Cooperation to carry forward a program designed to afford employment opportunities to qualified postgraduate students and doctorate personnel which will enable them to gain research and other experience under the direction of the Department's scientific staff. Pursuant thereto, the following special appointment authority has been approved by the Civil Service Commission:

1. Scientific and professional positions when filled by bona fide members of the faculty of an accredited college or university not to exceed 120 days in the period of 1 year in any individual case and the total number of appointments not to exceed 25 at any one time, and,
2. Professional and subprofessional positions in the field of research filled by graduate students at accredited colleges or universities provided that such research work is to be used by the student as a basis for securing certain academic credit toward a graduate degree. The total employment in any one case shall not exceed 1 year unless extended by the Commission and such employment may be continued under this provision only so long as these conditions are met. The total number of positions to be filled under this provision may not exceed 100 at any one time.

While this cooperative plan was developed by the Graduate School, the Department and the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, employment under the arrangements described above is not restricted to persons from land-grant institutions.

Several agencies in the Department have attempted to develop an interest in employment with us by hiring college students for summer work. The Soil Conservation Service was able to secure many workers this summer as a result of examinations held for soil conservation aid and engineering aid positions in grades SP-3 and SP-5. Qualification requirements for these positions are 2 years of college in this field for SP-3, and 3 years, for SP-5 plus passing of a written aptitude test. Ninety-four percent of the persons who were offered employment as a result of these examinations accepted. College sophomores and juniors hired for summer employment are given regular civil-service probational appointments and then are furloughed without pay to resume their studies in the fall. Upon graduation with a bachelor's degree in the appropriate subject field, these employees may be promoted to P-1 positions without further examination.

Besides these problems of recruitment, salary adjustment, and training, we are also faced with the Civil Service Commission's decentralized examination program and the establishment of a

health program. With regard to examinations, we are expected to conduct them with funds and personnel of the Department and we receive no specific appropriation covering this work. With respect to the health program under Public Law 658, Seventy-ninth Congress (5 U. S. C. 150), we must undertake certain basic surveys and studies in cooperation with the Public Health Service and the Bureau of the Budget over the next several years while the program is in the formulative stage. More information concerning each of these phases of our activity is contained further on this report.

1948 PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

The efforts of those engaged in personnel administration throughout the Department in 1948 have been intensified to develop better ways and means of getting a good job done by all employees on our many programs. Such efforts have been aimed at increased efficiency, health services, and morale, more accurate allocation of positions, encouragement of Department officials in the use of training methods to improve work, better selection and supervision of employees, simplification of rules and regulations, and better organization. Some of the major activities carried out at the Department and agency levels during the past fiscal year, along with current program activities, are treated in the following sections.

EXPANSION OF THE CIVIL-SERVICE EXAMINATION PROGRAM

The civil-service examination program which was resumed during the previous year got into full swing in the fiscal year 1948. Examinations were given by field boards of examiners and through the central committee of expert examiners for 84 options and classes of positions. As a result of these examinations, 199 different registers have already been or are scheduled to be established. In addition, many other examination specifications have been developed. However, the Civil Service Commission's facilities and schedules were such that additional examinations could not be announced. Fortunately, the Office of Personnel has been able to work out an arrangement with the Civil Service Commission whereby the Department is now able to use many of the registers established by boards of examiners of other Government agencies. This has been an important step forward in our examination work.

The Beltsville, Md., board of examiners was established during the year making a total of nine field boards of examiners in operation in the Department. A legal examining board was also established in the Office of the Solicitor to formulate standards for evaluating applications and to assign numerical ratings to applications for the purpose of filling legal positions. Although the appointments to legal positions are effected outside the scope of the civil-service examination program, this Department attempts to maintain high standards so that only highly qualified personnel will be eligible for these positions. A procedure was recommended and has been approved for the establishment of ranked registers to be used in filling attorney positions and it was placed into effect in 1948.

There is an urgent need for speeding up the examination process. Recruitment has been seriously hampered by the lag between the announcement of an examination and the establishment of the register.

Increased efforts will be actively directed toward the improvement in form and content of civil-service examinations and expediting of the examination process.

PROGRESS IN CONVERSION TO CIVIL SERVICE

Progress in the program of conversion to civil service represents a maximum that could have been accomplished. The Department has a primary responsibility for the conversion program as it applies to positions peculiar to the Department. To the extent that the facilities and schedule of the Civil Service Commission permitted, every possible examination of this kind was given where there was a conversion need. In the positions for which the examinations were given, almost complete conversion to status has been accomplished.

During the year approximately 6,300 employees were converted to competitive status from "excepted" appointments in the Farmers Home Administration. This was done under authority of the Farmers Home Administration Act of August 14, 1946, which established that agency as a successor to the Farm Security Administration. At the close of the war over 50 percent of the Soil Conservation Service staff held war-service appointments, but by the end of fiscal year 1948 almost the entire staff had been converted to civil service.

The conversion program presented many problems and required a considerable volume of clerical work. Its successful completion was facilitated by the helpful attitude, cooperation, and action of the Civil Service Commission. The conversion of Farmers Home Administration positions to the competitive service made it necessary to recruit and select many new employees. Approximately one-half of the total recruiting needs represented positions peculiar to that agency. Consequently, no standards had been developed, examinations announced, or registers established by the Civil Service Commission for these positions. Thus, a major accomplishment has been the development of standards for these positions, their approval by the Civil Service Commission, and steps that have been taken to announce examinations later this year.

Most of the positions in which satisfactory conversion progress has not been made are those found generally throughout the Government for which the examining responsibility rests with the Civil Service Commission. There are a few positions that come under the committee-and-board system in which conversion has not been accomplished because of the Commission's crowded schedule.

RECRUITMENT AND PLACEMENT

There has been continued increase in the use of delegated employment authority, as reflected by a reduction of about 25 percent in the proportionate number of personnel actions submitted for prior approval. The delegated employment authority program is administered through the development of employment policies and procedures, a post audit of actions taken under delegated authority, visits in the field, constant advice and assistance to agencies of the Department, conferring with the Civil Service Commission in the solution of particularly difficult employment problems, and in other ways. The effectiveness of these efforts is revealed by a substantial improvement in the quality of agency employment work as shown by post audits of

personnel actions, field reviews, and Civil Service Commission inspections.

An important step was taken in October 1947, prior to the announcement that year of the civil-service examination for junior agricultural assistant, which involved 25 options, to acquaint the land-grant colleges and other colleges throughout the country with employment opportunities in the Department of Agriculture. Recommendations were obtained from the various agencies of the Department on the selection of a Department of Agriculture representative in each State and Territory. Those selected were given the responsibility of representing the Department of Agriculture at the educational institutions in their respective States to acquaint deans of the colleges, members of the faculty, and student groups with the work of the Department and with Department of Agriculture needs for personnel. Each of these representatives was supplied with copies of the civil-service examination announcements, publications describing functions of the Department, handbooks, and illustrated color charts and film strips illustrating the work of the Department.

Results indicated that this approach was well worth while. It produced increased interest, on the part of State officials and students, in employment with the Department, and resulted in an increased number of applications for the examinations. The experiences gained by these recruiting representatives, as reported to this Office, will enable us to further improve our recruiting program in the years to come.

As the result of an agreement between the United States and Mexican Governments it was necessary to recruit several hundred United States citizens for duty in Mexico to assist in a program of eradicating foot-and-mouth disease in that country, and preventing its introduction into the United States (Public Law 8, 80th Cong., February 28, 1947). The greatest need in this program was for veterinary personnel. A considerable number of other types of positions are also included, such as sanitary technicians, livestock appraisers and inspectors, paymasters, radio engineers, diesel engineers, mechanics, and administrative and clerical staff workers. As a part of the program of preventing the spreading of foot-and-mouth disease, it was necessary to establish a patrol along the 1,900 miles of the Mexican border. Approximately 600 employees are now on this job, a great majority performing their duties on horseback and in army jeeps. These men are recruited in the local area where they are assigned and are required to furnish their own horses and equipment.

The Forest Service, in addition to participating in the test evaluation study that the Department is carrying on in cooperation with the Civil Service Commission, is experimenting in a small way with several tests as guides in placement. Two of these tests have been pretty well validated. They have been given to a large number of junior professional recruits selected from the 1946 and 1947 lists, and it is planned to give them to recruits selected from the 1948 lists. If the results of this experiment measure up to expectation, these tests will prove to be very helpful in assisting new employees plan satisfactory and constructive careers.

The emergency employment authority contained in the Research and Marketing Act of 1946 has enabled the Production and Marketing Administration and other agencies operating under the act to obtain much valuable talent to staff research projects. A few registers which

have been made available to date by the Civil Service Commission have also provided a source of these especially needed technical and highly specialized personnel. It is important to point out that this type of a long-range research program cannot be staffed overnight and that our initial recruiting success has been accomplished in the face of an extremely limited technical-labor market and strong hiring competition from industry, technical institutions, and research institutes.

The establishment of eight field placement committees, located throughout the country, was announced June 24, 1947. The actual operation of the committees, however, started after the beginning of the fiscal year. These committees, operating under the direction of the Employment Division of this Office, have administered all of the field activities in connection with interbureau reassignment, as required by the reduction-in-force regulations, and have been very active and useful in general placement work. It is contemplated that the committees will play an important part in the administration of the Department-wide career-service program.

CLASSIFICATION

The Office of Personnel, during the fiscal year, allocated over 4,000 jobs that were beyond the scope of classification authority delegated to the bureaus. A similar work load is anticipated this year even though delegations of authority were extended during the year to the Bureau of Plant Industry, Soils and Agricultural Engineering; Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations; Library; and Commodity Exchange Authority. This completes delegations to all operating agencies except to the Bureau of Agricultural and Industrial Chemistry. Tentative arrangements have been made for that agency's acceptance of delegated authority for the regional laboratories beginning the early part of fiscal year 1949. Classification authority of the Soil Conservation Service was expanded and a program was undertaken to train regional-office personnel in the use of the modified authority.

Several of the larger agencies have initiated classification-survey plans as an essential part of their delegated-authority programs in the field. The Farmers Home Administration plan provides for systematic coverage of two selected class series of standard jobs each month in the State offices, designed to assure conformance of actual work assignment of the field people with standard job descriptions. The Forest Service has adopted a policy for classification-survey coverage of each national forest at least once every 2 years. The Soil Conservation Service began combined organization and classification surveys in Region 5 at Albuquerque and expects to extend these surveys to other regions. The Production and Marketing Administration has completed combined surveys of all its State offices, a program which was conducted with a great deal of intensity during the past year and utilized the combined efforts of the Washington and field staffs. In addition, organization and classification surveys are now being conducted in all branches of the Production and Marketing Administration offices in Washington. Surveys in the departmental service progressed in both the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and the Farm Credit Administration.

The Department's field survey program progressed well during the year, covering Mississippi, Illinois, North Dakota, and Kansas. These surveys were designed to afford a coverage of some six to nine agencies at locations below the level of regional offices of the agencies. Each survey covered from 100 to 200 positions and afforded an accurate appraisal of the effectiveness of delegated authority. In addition, eight sampling audits of allocations made under delegated authority were completed in five different agencies in Washington, D. C.

The Farmers Home Administration completely overhauled its standard-job-description system by publishing a new standard-job manual containing a revised set of standard jobs for the new State offices and the area finance offices. The manual was accompanied by a policy statement of the Administrator to all State directors, properly emphasizing their line responsibility of keeping the work assignments of their employees consistent with applicable standard-job descriptions.

Specific training in job-description preparation was conducted for the following agencies: Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine; Bureau of Plant Industry, Soils and Agricultural Engineering; Bureau of Agricultural and Industrial Chemistry; Bureau of Dairy Industry; Administrator's Office of Agricultural Research Administration; and the Commodity Exchange Authority. This work is carried on in the interest of generally improving the quality and clarity of job descriptions.

A number of key positions for the foot-and-mouth disease program in Mexico were handled during the previous fiscal year but since the program did not get actively under way until about September 1947, the majority of the positions were classified during the first 4 months of fiscal year 1948. Some of the positions were later reviewed in October 1947 in conjunction with a field review of personnel operations. The program has continued to be active during the year and organizational changes have called for additional allocation and reallocation of positions. Because of the nature of the foot-and-mouth disease program, many of these allocations were without precedent in the Department.

The enactment of the Research and Marketing Act resulted in the allocation of a number of positions in the Office of Experiment Stations; Bureau of Agricultural and Industrial Chemistry; Bureau of Plant Industry, Soils and Agricultural Engineering; Production and Marketing Administration; Administrator's Office of the Agricultural Research Administration; and the Administrator's Office of the Research and Marketing Act. Agencies expected to submit additional positions under the Research and Marketing Act are the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and the Extension Service.

During the year, the field sub-branches of the Library were abolished and consolidated with main branches, thus requiring allocation and reallocation of some of the remaining positions. Reduction in force in the Solicitor's Office caused considerable reassignments and revisions of positions. This was also one of the underlying reasons for the survey program in the Production and Marketing Administration and the Farm Credit Administration.

The Civil Service Commission's field classification post-audit program continued to be active during the year. Post-audits by the Commission have shown adequate compliance with Commission specifica-

tions. We feel that the Civil Service Commission has operated the field audit program very satisfactorily.

The Classification Council of the Department held eight meetings during the year and the program agenda included a variety of subjects covering effects of reductions in force on classification, salary plans in industry, evaluation of professional positions, standards of performance, job-description preparation, and other similar topics of active interest to agency classification staffs.

FIELD REVIEW

In continuation of its policy of examining the manner in which delegated personnel authorities are being exercised, members of the Office of Personnel reviewed the personnel operations of 58 field offices during the year. In general, the reviews disclosed that the great majority of field offices were benefiting from the delegations which had been made to them. Such offices could consummate personnel transactions in much less time than had formerly been necessary.

The reviews showed that in general, delegated authorities were being exercised correctly. In addition, personal contact with field officials offered an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of our personnel policies in serving program operations and to discover how the Office could be of maximum service to our bureaus and field offices.

Following the reviews, personnel authority was withdrawn from certain small field offices since adequate service could be supplied by other offices intermediate to the Washington and operating levels. It was found that the low number of personnel actions made it uneconomical to retain the authority and that the burden of learning Civil Service Commission and Department regulations was out of proportion to the benefits derived from the delegation. On the other hand, bureaus with field offices having a large number of employees and a considerable volume of personnel activity were persuaded to assume personnel-authority delegations.

SIMPLIFICATION OF PROCEDURES

Economy in personnel management is largely dependent on the simplification of operations to their bare essentials. This is a goal toward which we must continuously strive. Procedural requirements, like weeds, grow unless a constant vigilance is maintained to check their growth. Procedures have a tendency to become complex and burdensome, therefore this Office has continued its policy of constantly reviewing its procedural requirements. We have encouraged the various agencies in the Department to do likewise.

The Forest Service reports a concerted effort—nothing new or different except as to intensity—to get some clarification and simplification in this aspect of its work. That bureau's personnel officers believe, as do we, that much procedural work is more or less self-imposed and that to a large extent this is a result of an imperfect understanding of the complex and frequently changing instructions. It grows out of a sort of "safety first" attitude—to miss nothing. While the project of the Forest Service has not progressed very far, as yet, results achieved to date indicate that it will be very productive.

At the departmental level, we have directed attention to simplification in the following areas: (1) Instructional releases, (2) flow of

work (3) standardization of personnel forms, (4) procedural requirements.

A project to codify the several different types of personnel releases into one manual was completed during the year. This project provided an opportunity to eliminate or correct obsolete instructions, and to consolidate and reissue them in a uniform manner in the Administrative Regulation series. Since the regulations have been codified, we are now looking for the most practicable means to tie together regulatory issuances from the Civil Service Commission, the Department, and the agencies for the benefit of field offices. We are also following a practice of measuring the readability of our instructional releases to make certain they are kept as simple and as understandable as possible.

This office has cooperated for the last few years with the Civil Service Commission and the Bureau of the Budget in employment and classification procedure-study surveys. In these undertakings, representative agencies of the Department were selected and process charts of work flow were prepared. As a result, many steps of the work process were eliminated by the simplification of internal operations in each of the agencies. Also, recommendations resulted which required action at the departmental or Civil Service Commission level. Some of these are of a long-term nature and have become projects that are being worked on by a committee of the Federal Personnel Council.

As another outgrowth of these surveys and recommendations, the Department has worked closely with the Federal Personnel Council, the Bureau of the Budget, and the Civil Service Commission on the standardization of certain personnel forms that are commonly used throughout the Government.

Action on the following list of forms involved standardization and simplification: (1) Request for personnel action, (2) notification of personnel action, (3) service record card, (4) employee record card, (5) report of Federal civilian employment, (6) application for Federal employment.

A project for simplifying procedural requirements is being worked on to reduce the number of certifications necessary on Standard Form 50, Notification of Personnel Action, more commonly referred to as the fanfold. We have been able to eliminate departmental requirements for a large number of these certifications; many similar ones are required by the Civil Service Commission. We believe that some of these might be eliminated and plan to recommend such action to the Commission.

EMPLOYEE HEALTH

As previously stated, the Employee Health Division was established during the year as authorized by Public Law 658, Seventy-ninth Congress (5 U. S. C. 150). A medical officer was appointed to plan and direct the Department's health program and some progress has been made. He consulted with the Public Health Service in the development of his plans and is presently concentrating on implementing them. As a first step, a considerable quantity of needed equipment has been purchased. Among other things this included a fluoroscope and an electrocardiograph. Following is an account of some of the things that were done the past year.

Calls for service made by employees on the health rooms in the Washington metropolitan area numbered 22,710. The services offered were limited by the fact that no medical officer was available for regular duty in these rooms. It is anticipated that the services will be expanded to the full scope as authorized by Public Law 658.

In cooperation with the United States Public Health Service and the District Health Service, a mass X-ray survey was conducted to detect cases of pulmonary tuberculosis that might exist among employees of the Department. Over 80 percent of our Washington employees participated in the survey.

Immunizations for Rocky Mountain spotted fever were offered to employees at Beltsville, Md., exposed to the ticks that are carriers of the disease. A total of 1,055 doses of vaccine was given. It is planned to offer this immunization in the spring of 1949 to all employees who desire it.

During the year 113 employees donated blood to hospitals and 197 donated blood to the Red Cross. Efforts will be made to increase the number of donors for the coming year.

Surveys of several cities where there is a considerable concentration of Federal employees are being made by the United States Public Health Service. As a result of these surveys and the recommendations of the United States Public Health Service, it is anticipated that cooperative employee health services will be established in these places. The contemplated surveys for fiscal year 1949 will cover approximately 8,000 field employees of the Department. Arrangements have been made for a pilot program of this type at the Federal center in Denver, Colo. The services will be operated by the United States Public Health Service by contract with the particular agencies. The Department of Agriculture employees at Denver will be covered by this program.

Many other field employees of the Department are relatively isolated in smaller places. For these employees the cooperative plans such as have been developed for the Federal center in Denver will not be practicable. It seems that medical service can best be extended to these employees by contracts with private practitioners and county medical societies. In all instances our employee health program will cooperate with existing health agencies, both public and private, and utilize their services wherever possible. In those localities where public-health services are not fully developed or are nonexistent, the employee health service will cooperate in initiating and developing those services. We are planning to conduct a study at some location where there are a small number of Department employees as the first step in developing a suitable health program in these isolated areas.

The scope of our program as established and authorized by Public Law 658 will include:

1. Preventive programs relating to health.

These preventive programs will require mass attack on general health problems and the appraisal of health problems of individuals. This will include the appraisal and correction of environmental conditions of employment that adversely affect the health of the employees.

2. Treatment of on-the-job illnesses and general conditions requiring emergency attention.

Where continuing or repeated treatment is required, the proper referral will be made. In some instances these referrals will be made as the result of physical examinations and health appraisals.

3. Preemployment and other examinations.

At the present time preemployment examinations in the Washington area for the Department of Agriculture are made by the United States Public Health Service. Where this examination reveals that the individual is employable but has health problems, periodic reexamination will be made. Other examinations will be made if sickness causes excess absenteeism, if substandard work as reported by the supervisor is attributable to ill health, upon request by the individual employee for examination and health appraisal, and under certain emergency conditions.

As the program expands and facilities permit, these services will be provided for our field employees.

SAFETY

In the field of safety, some progress was made and some things remain unfavorable. On the unfavorable side, the cost and frequency of accidents in the Department has increased in some agencies. This has been attributed to an increase in hazardous work, to a more accurate reporting of accidents, to lessening of safety effort in certain of the agencies, and to some complacency with the record.

On the favorable side, we find that the Forest Service, usually our highest accident group, has reorganized its safety program. Much of the Forest Service work is very hazardous—in the timber, on the range, in construction and maintenance, and most of all, in forest-fire suppression. These conditions, however, and the opportunities they present for accidents offer a challenge for redoubled efforts in accident prevention rather than as an alibi for the accidents that occur. This attitude has been emphasized by the Forest Service during recent years and an active safety campaign is now under full momentum. So far we see very encouraging improvement.

The Bureau of Animal Industry established a safety program and employed a full-time safety engineer in the closing months of the year. This new safety program has not effected a decrease in the accident frequency of the agency because the amount of hazardous work was increased by the reassignment of the meat inspection service to the agency, and because of the foot-and-mouth disease eradication program in Mexico. The comprehensive safety program prevented a more serious rise in the agency's accident rate during the year and should begin to show a reduction in present rates in the near future.

The Soil Conservation Service established the lowest lost-time injury-frequency rate in its history in 1948. This rate of 4.7 injuries per million hours worked represents an improvement of over 600 percent since the origin of the Soil Conservation safety program in 1935.

The Department Safety Council held regular monthly meetings during the year. These were of material assistance in maintaining interest in safety. Speakers prominent in safety and fire-prevention organizations outside the Department addressed these meetings. Committees of the council worked with interdepartmental and national organizations in preparing programs and written material for Spring

Clean-up Week, National Farm Safety Week, and National Fire Prevention Week.

There is need for more intensive safety activity on the part of many of the agencies and of this Office which can be given only if facilities are expanded to perform the additional work necessary.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Progress was made by the Department agencies in assuming responsibility for advising their employees on available personal services. Assistance was given by the Office of Personnel on housing, transportation, and general welfare. However, such information was furnished more frequently to the agency for dissemination to employees than directly to employees.

Numerous programs both patriotic and morale building were held for the benefit of Department personnel. Relations with employee groups and organizations remained good throughout the year. These groups cooperated in the presentation of programs and in estimating employee reaction to proposed regulations and the like.

The newly appointed Director of Recreation of the Employees' Welfare Association made progress in encouraging the establishment of agency recreation associations and in the organization of clubs and classes in which employees have manifested interest. Employees of 10 agencies in the Department now have associations, and there are 14 clubs and classes operating. A hobby show, in which more than 100 exhibits were entered and which more than 1,000 people attended, was held one evening in Washington.

A Department policy on solicitations was formulated in cooperation with representatives of other staff offices and the Office of the Secretary. There are frequently two or three charitable campaigns running simultaneously in the Department. These collections cause the Department considerable loss of time of those employees who collect such campaign funds but represent undertakings with which as a matter of policy the Department cooperates.

Grievance procedures were revised during the year, to make them more understandable and more equitable to employees. As with previous revisions, a copy of the procedure was sent to every employee in the Department to make sure they had first-hand knowledge of their rights of appeal. We have also encouraged the adjustment of grievances between the employee and his supervisor before they become serious.

EFFICIENCY RATINGS

For the past 2 years the Farmers Home Administration, by special arrangement with the Department and Civil Service Commission, has been conducting an experiment in a new system for determining efficiency ratings. Attention has been directed to the more effective use of standards of performance specifically developed for all positions. That agency reports its administrative officers and supervisors at all levels overwhelmingly favor the continued use of standards of performance specifically adapted to each job, as it makes supervision and training more effective and provides a means of arriving at a more accurate evaluation of performance. Other agencies of the Department have been following the Civil Service Commission's prescribed procedure for conducting their efficiency-rating programs and

are interested in the outcome of the Farmers Home Administration undertaking.

A departmental Committee on Performance Standards was appointed. This committee of representatives from our several agencies has been asked to draft and submit a policy statement governing the development and use of performance standards in the Department; to recommend a program for effecting the policy; and to consult with and advise this Office on technical problems in this field. A member of this Office serves as executive secretary to the committee.

Considerable attention has also been directed to the matter of efficiency-rating appeals by our field employees. Present facilities permit only written appeals by them, and this limitation is burdensome to them, costly, and time consuming. We have therefore developed a plan, subject to approval by the Civil Service Commission, for extending the right of an oral hearing before a board of review to employees in the field service. The plan contemplates the establishment of a United States Department of Agriculture Board of Review in each of the 14 Civil Service Commission regions in addition to the existing board in Washington. Public Law 623 will also be a factor in expediting the adjudication of appeals of penalty ratings because it provides that employees wrongfully removed or suspended shall be compensated for the time lost as a result of the removal or suspension.

CHANGES IN THE RETIREMENT PROGRAM

The retirement program has been given impetus by the passage of the new Retirement Act, which became effective April 1, 1948. Since it is important that our employees be familiar with changes in the act that affect their benefits and future security, we have a responsibility to acquaint them with its provisions. Consequently, during the year, the Department began work on a program to accomplish this. Our plan includes the following items and substantial progress has been made on each of them:

1. Designation of a retirement adviser at each headquarters where there is a significant number of employees.
2. Training courses for retirement advisers and the preparation of an adviser's manual.
3. A motion picture designed to explain the principal features of the retirement law and to emphasize the advantages of retirement at an age when the benefits accruing to both the employee and the Government coincide. The script for this picture has been completed.

An unofficial survey by the Organization of Professional Employees of the Department of Agriculture showed that there were 4,287 employees currently working in the Department who had previously been employed on cooperative Federal-State programs and who, under the application of existing rules of the Civil Service Commission, were denied credit for retirement purposes under the Civil Service Retirement Act. Accordingly, this Office, in April 1948, sent a report to the Civil Service Commission describing in detail the conditions under which these employees of the Department had previously worked and urging the adoption of new criteria for the purpose of allowing them to get credit toward civil-service retirement for their employment

previous to appointment as full-time workers in the competitive civil service. The Civil Service Commission, although expressing its sympathy and recognition of the problem involved, stated that it was without legislative authority to approve the Department's request. This Office will continue efforts on behalf of these employees.

CLASS SPECIFICATIONS

In 1948 the Department assisted the Civil Service Commission in the development of class specifications for 81 series of positions. Some of these specifications have been published in final form and others are currently in the process of being completed. Assistance consisted of arranging and participating in preliminary conferences, furnishing background information, working with the Civil Service Commission representatives in developing specifications for certain classes of positions common only to this Department, and in reviewing and furnishing the Commission with constructive criticisms on tentative drafts of specifications submitted to us for review prior to being sent to the printer.

New groups of specialists in the bureaus are continually being organized to develop, by conference method, information incident to the preparation of specifications. Operating people are beginning to realize that specifications can be helpful to them from the standpoint of management in general; their interest in the development of sound and informative class specifications is becoming widespread throughout the Department.

The intensive program of the Civil Service Commission on the development of new specifications is expected to come to a close at the end of the fiscal year 1949. At that time it is estimated that specifications will have been published covering approximately 75 percent of the positions in the Federal service. Beginning July 1950 the Civil Service Commission will be in a position to devote more time to the revision of specifications already published; therefore we are directing our attention to the review of specifications to determine which series affecting positions in the Department will require revision.

WAGE ADMINISTRATION

Regulations establishing an administrative plan for fixing wages of ungraded employees (those exempt from Classification Act pay scales) were completed and issued during the year. The plan provides a more uniform and equitable method of setting pay rates for the employees involved. In this connection, new wage boards were established in several bureaus of the Department, and a review wage board was set up in Washington to review, coordinate, and assure compliance with departmental policy. It is expected that additional boards will be established during the fiscal year 1949.

A law passed in 1892 (40 U. S. C. 321-322) and subsequently amended, known as the 8-hour law, provides severe penalties for any Government supervisor who requires or permits a laborer or mechanic to work in excess of 8 hours in a calendar day except in extraordinary emergencies, such as flood and fire. The interpretation of this law by the courts has even applied it to ordinary emergencies and consequently the Department has incurred expenses because of inability to continue such employment in cases of temporary emergency. For ex-

ample, in constructing a bridge, if the pouring of concrete is to extend beyond an 8-hour period, a stand-by crew must be recruited to take over the job at the end of the regular shift if the work is to be continued.

The Department, therefore, has been very much interested in securing an amendment to the 8-hour law which will permit work by laborers and craftsmen in excess of 8 hours when it is administratively determined such work will be in the public interest. We propose that such extra work be paid for at overtime rates if this is customary in the locality. A detailed report containing this recommendation was prepared and submitted to the Federal Personnel Council during the year for its consideration and that of other Departments concerned with this problem.

INVESTIGATORY SERVICES

Several new assignments in the investigations field were carried out by this Office in the fiscal year 1948. Personal transactions in commodities and commodity futures entered into by Department employees were investigated and record checks were made with respect to employees and other persons nominated to represent the Department at international conferences. The latter assignment is of a continuing nature.

Another new assignment was coordinating and supervising the Federal employees loyalty program with respect to Department employees, in accordance with provisions of Executive Order 9835. This program involved (1) preparing appropriate instructions to the agencies covering the securing and submitting of fingerprint charts and other required forms; (2) receiving and reviewing agency certifications with respect to loyalty forms submitted to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as of March 31, 1948; (3) preparing the Secretary's certification to the Civil Service Commission, stating that such forms had been submitted for 65,926 employees who were on the rolls of the Department on September 30, 1947; (4) receiving and distributing to the agencies incomplete or unsatisfactory loyalty forms returned by the Civil Service Commission; (5) maintaining a follow-up system to insure that satisfactory replacements were submitted for such returned forms; (6) receiving and distributing to the agencies processed forms stamped to show that the Federal Bureau of Investigation's files contain no disloyal data on the employees whose names appear on such forms; and (7) transmitting to the agencies, with appropriate instructions, reports of arrest records discovered as a result of the loyalty program.

The procedure to be followed in effecting suspensions from duty without pay had to be changed to comply with the provisions of Public Law 623, approved by the President on June 10, 1948. The new provisions will result in an increase in the disciplinary work, since the law provides that no employee in the competitive service may be suspended until he has received a letter of charges and has been given a reasonable time to file a written answer.

Investigations conducted during the fiscal year total 378. This total includes the following types of investigation:

1. Investigations of alleged misconduct or delinquency on the part of employees of the Department.
2. Suitability investigations of employees whose positions

- empower them to negotiate contracts, and of employees occupying administrative and fiscal key positions.
3. Investigations of personal transactions in commodities and commodity futures entered into by employees of the Department.
 4. Security investigations of employees designated to handle confidential material, and of employees and nonemployees nominated to represent the Department at international conferences.
 5. Administrative investigations of various types.

The Office reviewed 177 cases in which 184 disciplinary actions had been taken by the agencies under delegated authority, and processed 412 disciplinary cases submitted by the agencies with requests for prior approval of the Director of Personnel. These resulted in 239 disciplinary actions, of which 37 were disciplinary suspensions and 6 were removals after the preferment of charges. Five of the employees who were removed from their positions were veterans, one of whom exercised his right of appeal to the Civil Service Commission under section 14 of the Veterans Preference Act of 1944. In this case the Department's removal decision was sustained.

ORGANIZATION

We have continued to exercise our delegated authority to review the organizational structure of the Department, and during the year examined 133 charts, proposing changes in agency organization, which were submitted for prior approval. Six proposals were rejected and major modifications were recommended in 14 cases; the others were approved as recommended.

Major organizational adjustments included the establishment and disbanding of the Office for Food and Feed Conservation; the establishment of a Marketing Research Branch in the Production and Marketing Administration; the separation of the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation from the Production and Marketing Administration and its establishment as an independent agency of the Department; the transfer of certain marketing research functions from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics to the Production and Marketing Administration; and, the transfer of the Remount Service from the Quartermaster Corps of the Department of the Army to the Department of Agriculture.

TRAINING

The Department's personnel policy with respect to training provides that a program of employee training will be maintained as a means of promoting effective and economical service. It helps the employee become adjusted to his situation, enables him to give better service, and helps him prepare for advancement to work of greater responsibility.

The first step in training an employee is to help him become acquainted with his work and his surroundings. Orientation training helps him to know the purpose and place of his job in the work of his agency and in the Department as a whole. A film entitled "A Decision for Bill," and a series of charts entitled "Guide to Broader Understanding and Better Public Service for USDA Employees" are being used throughout the Department to give employees a better idea of the many

activities for which the Department is responsible. In addition, some agencies have emphasized additional orientation training to meet their individual needs. For example, the Production and Marketing Administration developed three sound film strips entitled (1) "The Story of PMA," (2) "The Story of CCC," and (3) "The Shipping and Storage Branch." The Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine gave special attention to orienting seasonal employees hired to eradicate insects and diseases.

The Forest Service hired over 300 professional employees for whom special attention was given to technical on-the-job training. In this project, a special effort was made to get the employees acquainted not only with the work of present employees of the Forest Service, but also with retired members of the organization who had made notable contributions toward its development.

Other agencies assign a "sponsor," or an experienced employee, to each new employee who is responsible for acquainting him with fellow workers and the conditions under which he will work.

Another important step is the responsibility of the supervisor and management to see that the employee learns his job in the quickest and most effective way. He should know the standards of performance for the job and understand what additional information and skills that are required to enable him to get into full production in the shortest possible time.

This Office assists agencies in the development of techniques which will step up the learning process of the employee. In the marketing-research field a special course of 50 sessions was given to 150 employees to improve the skills and knowledge required to carry on new research provided for by the Research and Marketing Act of 1946.

The Joint Committee on Training for Government Service, composed of representatives of the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, and the Department of Agriculture meets semi-annually to make recommendations as to the type of specialized training college students should have to best fill positions in the Department. Three special meetings were held during 1948 to deal with the problem of providing a sufficient number of adequately trained people for the new marketing research program.

Many of the agencies have been conducting refresher group training courses for stenographers, secretaries, and clerks, and several others are planning to give similar training courses. The Extension Service is working with the State extension services on training of secretaries in the county offices.

All this training supplements the training which the supervisor must do to get employees well established in their jobs.

A chance for a satisfying career in the Department should be given each employee. He should be familiar with the possible lines of advancement and the experience and training necessary to qualify for positions of greater responsibility. One of the techniques often used to accomplish this is that of arranging for an experienced employee to train a new employee. This method of training not only benefits the new employee, but it enhances the experienced employee's ability to train others, which is one of the most important skills a supervisor must have. This idea was published in Suggestions to Supervisors, and used as the theme for the film strip "Off to a Good Start."

The Department has simplified and liberalized its educational-leave policies so that employees may continue their education. We have reported favorably on proposed legislation that will allow agencies to send employees to educational institutions with pay and expenses if such training is essential to the work of the agency. Through the cooperative effort of the Joint Committee on Training for Government Service, the Civil Service Commission has given permission to the Department to employ as many as 25 college people on an exchange basis during the next year. Plans have also been formalized for allowing students and faculty members of land-grant colleges to do special research and work which can be credited toward their degrees while employed in the Department.

The USDA Graduate School provides after-official-hour courses to meet the needs of employees in Washington as well as several correspondence courses designed to meet the needs of field employees. The Department also entered into an agreement with the Veterans' Administration that permits our agencies to train veterans under Public Laws 16 and 346, Seventy-eighth Congress.

Skills of supervision are key factors in the operation of any organization. Some of management's responsibility rests on the supervisor and much of management's authority operates through him. In his own unit each supervisor, in effect, is management. Our agencies recognize the importance of supervisory training and have used various techniques to accomplish it—on a person-to-person basis, through staff meetings, by circulating reading materials, and some is accomplished through formalized group discussions. At least five agencies of the Department have this year conducted the latter type of supervisory training. Outstanding among these is a 5-session course in "vision in supervision" which has been given with very satisfactory results to 43 of the top supervisors of the Meat Inspection Division of the Bureau of Animal Industry.

"Packaged" supervisory training materials have been effective. During the past 5 years job instruction training has been given to 12,335 supervisors by 486 trainers; 4,419 supervisors have had job relations training; and 11,884 job methods training. A course in conference leadership has also been given 1,771 supervisors. Trainers are usually selected from the best supervisors in the regional and State offices and they conduct the training sessions for others.

Since formal training in administration is not generally a requisite for filling vacancies in the Department, it is our responsibility to supply this training to employees as they advance up the administrative ladder. The response to a 50-session course in administrative management during the spring of 1948 reflected the interest which our top officials have in the need for training prospective administrators. Eighteen agencies sent 26 outstanding men ranging in grade from CAF-9 through CAF-13 and P-6 to take part in this course. For the fifty 1½-hour sessions, the attendance averaged better than 95 percent, even though those taking the course carried on their regular work. The Secretary's committee on training in administrative management, which developed the course, has recommended that two courses of this type be given during 1949, one in the fall and one in the spring, and plans are being made to do so. Tentative plans are also being made for a seminar administration for top officials of the Production and Marketing Administration.

Some of the regions of the Forest Service have conducted effective training in administrative management and supervision. The Milwaukee Region is now planning to continue a 9-month intensive course in administrative management at the University of Michigan, which was open to Forest Service employees before the war.

A few employees have had an opportunity to get training in administrative management outside the Department. Each year we have placed a few employees in the Civil Service Commission intern-training program, and have cooperated with the National Institute of Public Affairs in its intern program.

The Department has a responsibility for leadership in the agricultural research field. To meet this responsibility and to maintain our place of leadership, we must continually discover and develop, from among our professional and technical employees, those with special talents, who are capable of planning and administering our research programs. Increased emphasis on the scientific-research activity, especially in marketing and research, has increased the need for training in research management. Tentative plans have been made to aid in the development of our research employees through such training. USDA clubs have been instrumental in getting local universities to offer special courses for groups of field employees. Employees are encouraged to take leave for additional training, and to take after-hour courses or correspondence courses where available.

Another medium for assisting agencies in developing their research employees has been the Department Training Council. It has functioned since 1940, and is made up of staff and line officials of each agency in the Department who are close to the operations of their agencies and familiar with management needs.

We have adhered closely to the policy within the Department that management in the final analysis is responsible for training. Our training staff, therefore, devotes most of its time to the very important task of helping management, through the agency personnel and training officers, to plan and give that training which will increase the efficiency of operations and the satisfaction of the employees for jobs well done.

EMPLOYEE-RECOGNITION PROGRESS

The Department now has three major employee-incentive programs. Listed in order of establishment, they are: (1) Pay increases for superior accomplishment (meritorious promotions), (2) honor awards, and (3) cash awards.

The latter, cash awards, authorized by Public Law 600, August 2, 1946, was announced last November.

The initial ceremony of the Honor Awards Program, also authorized by Public Law 600 and Executive Order No. 9817, was held November 12, 1947. Former Secretary Clinton P. Anderson, made the presentations at this ceremony which took place in the Sylvan Theater, Washington Monument grounds. He presented 7 gold and 43 silver medals for outstanding distinguished and superior service to agriculture and the public. The gold awards, given for achievements of very broad or national significance, such as the award for the first practical commercial production of penicillin, were presented to five individuals and two organizational units. Thirty-three individuals and 10 units received silver medals. The second honor awards ceremony was held

May 17, 1948, and Acting Secretary Norris E. Dodd presented 4 individuals and 3 units with the distinguished service award and superior service awards were given to 45 individuals and 5 units.

All present employees of the Department are eligible for these awards except that pay increases for superior accomplishment are limited to occupants of classified positions compensated on a per annum basis who have not reached the maximum salary of their grade. To qualify for a cash award, the employee's suggestion must have been adopted since August 2, 1946, and to qualify for a distinguished service or superior service honor award, the employee must have been on the rolls on or after May 15, 1947.

Coincident with the honor-awards ceremonies and as a part of the Honor-Awards Program, length-of-service certificates and emblems were awarded to members of the Department who had served for a period of 10 or more years. The emblems and certificates are presented in recognition of 10-year intervals of service. So far, the Department has made one 50-year award and 184 awards for 40 years of service. In addition, approximately 27,500 employees have received awards for 30-, 20-, and 10-year periods of service.

PERSONNEL OFFICERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Personnel Officers Advisory Committee, which was created on April 28, 1945, performed useful and effective service during the year in the consideration of specific personnel problems on its own initiative or referred to it by the Director of Personnel. These problems pertained to such matters as efficiency ratings, organization of efficiency appeal-board systems, retirement plans and programs, salary administration, examination program, and personnel operations generally.

THIRD BIENNIAL PERSONNEL OFFICERS' MEETING

Following a practice of the past few years, the third biennial personnel officers' meeting was held at Biloxi, Miss., in December 1947. The meeting brought together personnel and operating officials from throughout the country to discuss their mutual problems. Principal attention at this meeting was directed to the need for a review and revision of some of the established policies, and to explore new ideas in personnel administration. Nine working committees were set up, and each was assigned a problem, which provided a systematic and logical means for focusing the thinking of every person on the development of sound personnel policies. These committees made a total of 98 recommendations in 3 groups:

1. Those dealing with the revision of well-established policies, such as classification and salary administration, efficiency ratings, examining processes, recruiting and appointments, safety, and training;
2. Those dealing with problems that an administrator already has but for which policies have not been definitely defined and crystallized, such as a career-service program, assisting supervisors with personnel problems, and health programs; and
3. Those dealing with problems about which there was no tangible policy, such as scientifically established work standards.

Many who attended these meetings have commented on the effective work made possible by them. Some of the recommendations which this Office could effect have already been carried to completion. However, a large percentage of the recommendations necessitate action by other agencies or Congress before they can be accomplished. We are actively doing what we can to direct attention to these to secure the desired action.

A LOOK TO THE FUTURE

Further progress can and will be made in the field of personnel administration; but, as in other fields, improvements must be carefully thought out. The good must be weighed against the bad, the practical against the impractical, the welfare of many against the welfare of a few. Our plans, therefore, do not encompass extreme reforms, but, rather, are built upon present needs as we see them. Some of these are evident now, others will become evident with new situations and the passing of time.

Some of our present concerns which will receive attention follow:

1. The examination process must be speeded up and strengthened. Considerable research remains to be done in the field of testing.
2. Recruitment efforts must be intensified and better results attained.
3. Training for Government work and in Government work must be extended.
4. Employee morale must be improved; the spirit of Government service must be more firmly indoctrinated.
5. Employee health and safety programs must be expanded and made more effective.
6. Incentive programs must be widened and emphasized.
7. Equitable classification of all jobs must be constantly pursued.
8. Standards of performance for all positions must be established.

As indicated earlier in this report, we are cooperating with the Civil Service Commission to improve and expedite the examination process. We plan to concentrate to a considerable extent on recruitment and are interested in the results which some of the recruitment devices we have developed will attain. Training is continuous, new courses and methods will be devised for ever-rising needs. The field of employee morale still offers a challenge; some aids to its betterment can only come with outside assistance. The employee-health program, now in its infancy, will receive considerable emphasis this coming year, and as it progresses will become more and more a preventive-medical program. Safety consciousness is being extended through safety campaigns and the efforts of our safety engineers. In cooperation with other staff offices, more attention is being devoted to incentive programs to promote management-improvement suggestions and provide merited recognition for deserving individuals. Periodic surveys of all positions to insure proper classification will continue to be conducted by the agencies and the Department. And our work to develop and extend the application of standards of performance will receive greater stress.

In response to a request from the House of Representatives' Committee on Post Office and Civil Service for "a brief but comprehensive state-

ment containing recommendations for the improvement of the Federal Civil Service," this Department addressed a letter on January 23, 1948, to Hon. Edward H. Rees, chairman of the committee, which was forwarded over the signature of former Secretary Clinton P. Anderson. Among other things, the letter contained a recommendation for a code of personnel legislation which would bring together laws pertaining to personnel functions now found in numerous acts and various legislative authorities that are conveyed to several different agencies for their administration. The letter also contained numerous suggestions. Some of these have been acted upon and others require either amendment of existing legislation or initiation of new legislation. Because of its comprehensive nature, we have included it as a supplement to this report to further indicate some of the objectives we are striving toward.

SUPPLEMENT
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Washington 25, D. C.

JANUARY 23, 1948.

HON. EDWARD H. REES, *Chairman,*
Committee on Post Office and Civil Service,
House of Representatives.

DEAR MR. REES: The following information, prepared by our Office of Personnel, is submitted in reply to the second portion of your letter dated October 17, 1947, in which you requested "a brief but comprehensive statement containing recommendations for the improvement of the Federal Civil Service." Interpreting your request broadly, the scope of our reply is not being limited. We have followed, for your convenience, the outline proposed in your letter and in addition wish to make two general proposals which we feel are important to the efficient conduct of personnel administration in the Federal Government:

1. *Code of personnel legislation.*—At the present time, laws pertaining to personnel functions are found in numerous acts and various legislative authorities are conveyed to several agencies for their administration. For example, the Bureau of the Budget administers "personnel ceilings"; the General Accounting Office makes interpretations concerning the Classification Act; and the Federal Security Agency makes determinations under the Employees' Compensation Act.

To further illustrate the diversity of laws affecting Federal personnel administration, we are attaching a rather comprehensive chronological compilation developed in this Department. Although we have made a diligent search, we are not certain the list is complete. We, therefore, sincerely recommend that this matter of "codification" be given serious consideration since it will provide your committee and the Federal agencies a single source for all laws that pertain to Federal personnel administration.

2. *Authority of the Civil Service Commission.*—We believe the authority of the Civil Service Commission should be extended to include all the phases of personnel administration. However, the exercise of this authority should be specifically limited to the establishment of standards for the guidance of the departments, and their action, within these standards, should be final.

The comments below follow the outline proposed in your letter:

A. *Relations between the Civil Service Commission and the Agencies:*

The Department of Agriculture has enjoyed the finest of relations with the Civil Service Commission. We have found the Commission most cooperative, understanding, and helpful. At times, there have been differences of opinion, but we have found these differences healthful in promoting the development of effective personnel management. The amicable settlement of differences has always been accomplished, and the Commission's counsel has been most worthwhile.

B. *Use made of the Federal Personnel Council and benefits derived therefrom:*

The Department has been an active participant in the Federal Personnel Council and heartily endorses its place in Federal personnel management. The benefits derived are many, principal of which are:

(1) Its immediate contact with the President's liaison office for personnel management and with the Civil Service Commission.

(2) The setting of Government-wide personnel policy on many matters, both continuing and temporary in nature, in which uniform action is desirable for the best interests of the Department and the Government.

(3) The advance knowledge of personnel affairs furnished by the Council through its role as a "sounding board."

C. *Agency and Commission practices affecting recruitment, examinations, classifications, efficiency ratings, promotions, and the retirement system:*

For the most part, difficulties encountered in the administration of the various personnel activities do not result from administrative discretion in agency or commission practice but rather from legislative restriction or a lack of legislative implementation and authorization. Our suggestions in

this connection are listed under "D" following. The comments below are merely directed as general remarks about the particular activity listed.

(1) **Recruitment**—To promote the recruitment of desirable employees for Government jobs, Federal service must be made more attractive. Positive steps should be initiated to encourage a desire for a career in the Federal service.

(2) **Examinations**—Testing needs considerable research and development. This, and the decentralized program of examinations, can only be handled effectively with adequate appropriations therefor.

(3) **Classification**—The present classification system is in need of revision. Present grade restrictions are a hindrance in attracting and retaining competent employees.

(4) **Efficiency ratings**—The present efficiency rating system needs to be overhauled. Substituted therefor should be one which will provide for performance evaluation in a manner more conducive to good management and equity to employees.

(5) **Promotions**—The Department has adopted and followed a promotion-from-within policy. This could be more effective if it were extended Government-wide under a Federal career service plan.

(6) **Retirement**—The present retirement rates should be recomputed and correlated with the increased costs of living, and retirement after 30 years of service regardless of age should be permitted.

D. Suggestions for the improvement of the civil service or Federal personnel which may be of value to the Committee:

The following suggestions would require either the amendment of existing legislation or the initiation of new legislation. They are based upon our experience and represent improvements which we believe would be most desirable for Federal personnel administration.

(1) *Personnel ceilings.*—(a) The present method of controlling the number of employees in the Federal Government by the imposition of ceilings is not only undesirable but also a costly duplication of necessary fund controls. We believe the number of employees should be controlled directly by the amount of appropriated funds and that the existing machinery for the maintenance of ceilings should be eliminated.

(2) *Classification.*—(a) The Classification Act of 1923 should be amended to abolish the services and provide for the allocation of positions to grades and classes only. Services (CAF, P, SP, and CPC) serve no effective purpose and merely necessitates additional steps which often prolong discussion in allocating a position.

(b) Further amendment should provide that allocating authority of the Civil Service Commission be delegated to the heads of departments or their designated representatives with a post-audit conducted by the Commission.

(3) *Compensation.*—(a) The present salary ceiling should be raised to provide more adequate salaries for the top scientific and administrative employees of the Government.

(b) Present maximum subsistence rates for employees who travel should be increased.

(c) The several laws with provisions governing the payment of overtime to employees should be consolidated into one law standardizing these payments.

(d) The laws which govern the payment of dual compensation should be revised, consolidated, and simplified.

(e) Provision should be made for reimbursing employees who have been suspended from duty or separated and are later restored after a finding that their original suspension or separation was not justified.

(f) The present ruling of the Bureau of Internal Revenue regarding income-tax deductions in connection with lump-sum payments for annual leave should be corrected. The ruling requires that in computing the tax deduction the lump sum is considered as a 2 weeks' salary payment. This distorts the annual total which determines the tax rate and results in withholding an excessive amount even though an adjustment and refund is made later.

(g) Rates payable to employees in connection with injuries should be studied and some higher rate fixed in accordance with present living costs.

(h) The 8-hour law should be revised to permit laborers, craftsmen, etc., to work over 8 hours on other than an extreme emergency.

(4) *Retirement.*—(a) The provisions of the Retirement Act should be liberalized with regard to survivor benefits, earlier retirement, and disability retirement.

(b) Tontine deductions should be eliminated.

(c) The status of those individuals who work under joint Federal-State programs but who are now ineligible for either the Federal retirement system or any State system of retirement should be clarified.

(5) *Employment reports.*—(a) Simplified and uniform employment reporting procedures should be developed to meet the coordinated needs and serve the common use of congressional committees, the Civil Service Commission, the Bureau of the Budget, and other Federal agencies.

(6) *Miscellaneous.*—(a) The Veterans' Preference Act should be amended to provide for the limitation of veterans' preference to a period of 5 years after date of discharge with the exception of veterans having 10-point preference. Veterans should be required to attain a passing grade in civil-service examinations before being given additional credit for veteran preferences; provisions relative to educational requirements in civil-service examinations should be reconciled with the language of the Classification Act which in many instances requires the equivalent of a college education before an individual can be eligible for the position for which the examination is being given; and, absolute preference in the case of veterans who are applicants for positions P-1 and CAF-5 should be eliminated inasmuch as these positions are training grades for higher positions.

(b) Leave laws affecting employees assigned for duty in foreign countries should be equalized with those of the State Department, and all employees regardless of type of employment and location should receive annual leave on the same accrual basis; in addition, both sick and annual leave should accumulate on a pay-period basis.

(c) At the present time, jurisdiction over the enforcement of the provisions of the Hatch Act is lodged in both the Civil Service Commission and the Department. The act should be amended to permit the Civil Service Commission to delegate operational responsibility to the various departments.

(d) Some study should be given to the problem of alleviating serious difficulties frequently encountered in carrying out essential Government programs when it becomes necessary because of pending or possible reductions in appropriations to incur disproportionately large expenditures against current program funds on account of lump-sum leave payments due employees whose services must be terminated.

(e) Consideration should be given to the Government paying the premiums on bonds required of its employees incident to the performance of their official duties rather than requiring the employees to assume this obligation.

(f) Unemployment compensation should be made available to Federal employees.

(g) Legislation such as that introduced during the last Congress providing that departments could send employees to educational institutions for further education and training along lines of value to the Department should be passed.

(h) Appropriate interchange of personnel between Federal and State agencies should be authorized.

(i) Legislation for safety and training along the lines of the recently passed health bill is desirable.

The items listed above have been kept brief, as requested; more complete information can be furnished for each.

The Budget Bureau advises that "while there would be no objection to the submission of the proposed report to the Committee, this advice should not be construed as an endorsement by this Office of the views, or each and every recommendation contained in the report."

Sincerely,

(S) CLINTON P. ANDERSON,
Secretary.